

An hon. Member: At least he doesn't have to campaign for the leadership of his party.

Mr. Axworthy: I am not so sure, Mr. Speaker. It is no wonder there is no contest for leadership in the Conservative party, because there is no leader. They do not believe in leadership. The only leadership you get from the Conservative party is from Mr. Lougheed, Mr. Davis, Mr. Hatfield and Mr. Lyon. They run the Conservative party. All the Prime Minister does is carry their coffee for them. No wonder there is no leadership problem, because who would want to be a doorkeeper?

For goodness sake, Mr. Speaker, leadership is getting some motivation, having some direction and purpose. Who would want a job simply when you are there to sort of call the meetings and keep the notes? That is not leadership, so who wants it? The fact of the matter is that leadership in this day and age in Canada is setting priorities, and what we have in front of us is a government that has gone the wrong way in setting its priorities.

You know the old story about "wrong-way Corrigan," the guy who got in his airplane heading for Los Angeles and ended up in Ireland. We have a good example of "wrong-way Crosbie" and "wrong-way Clark." They are going the wrong way on economic policy. They do not know where they are headed.

Perhaps the most serious problem we have to face in these circumstances is the problem with the program we have in front of us, that is, that it is simply not equitable. It simply does not serve the people who need help. I would make a direct appeal to members opposite, those who profess their concern for those in need, simply to look at one substantial fact. Let us measure the housing need according to the percentage of income that must go to housing.

The fact of the matter is that on a survey done by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, the government's own Crown corporation, printed in July of this year, it is pointed out that on average across Canada 28 per cent of renters must pay over 30 per cent of their income for housing, and only 12 per cent of home owners. When you look at the figures across Canada—Mr. Crosbie, the Minister of Finance, got up and said that the people of metropolitan Toronto and Victoria will be out in the streets dancing; the apartment dwellers are so happy about this program, he said, they are clapping their hands with glee—in the highrises, in downtown Toronto and English Bay. Well, I have some news for him. In my own city of Winnipeg 39 per cent of those who rent must pay over 30 per cent of their income for housing, and only 12 per cent of home owners. That is a disparity that should strike to the very marrow of this legislation.

Let us talk about Vancouver. It has 30 per cent of tenants who must pay over 30 per cent, and only 13 per cent of home owners in the same situation. Let us talk about Ontario. Let us look at London. Some 27 per cent of renters must pay 30 per cent of their income, and only 9 per cent of home owners. The case is obvious. If the analysis goes down to a simple fundamental question of need, then the argument is very clear. Who has the need?

Mortgage Tax Credit

The fact of the matter again is that needs even go deeper than that. Fifty per cent of senior citizens pay over 30 per cent of their income for rent. Fifty-one per cent of single parent families pay over 31 per cent, and 30 per cent of unattached individuals pay over 30 per cent. How are all these people being helped by the wonderful Tory credit plan? In what way have they been receiving assistance in those kinds of problems? How gleeful are they going to be at Christmastime when this House passes this legislation and they open up that tax return that Mr. Crosbie has presented us? They will ask what is in it for them. They will look at their tax return and say, "Where is my line so that I can deduct something, because I am the one who obviously has a need?" All they are going to find is a big fat zero, which again adds up to how Tories think about economics and how they think about the community. That is the kind of example we see before us.

We also have serious disparities when it comes to the age and sex of people, because what is also true is that a large number of home owners who are elderly will not receive any kind of benefit under this program. In the first year the amount is \$62.50—alleluia! The government is talking about additional energy costs of \$500 to \$600. Again is that what we call Tory economics, upside down, topsy-turvy, that will give you \$60 and take back \$600, a ten to one deal? Boy, are the people at Christmastime going to be happy to hear about that one. The people who own those houses and do not have mortgages, which amounts to over two million households in this country, they are just going to be so happy with what you fellows have brought in for them! Boy, are they going to like that! That is just great for them.

The fact of the matter is that we add up again and again and again the fact that all kinds of Canadians are being discriminated against by this program.

What about the regional program? Again we have to look at who gets the benefits under this particular program. What is very clear is that provinces like the maritimes, where most of the homes are mortgage free, will receive something like 10 per cent less than the benefits in the province of Ontario. And Quebec which happens, by its own choice to have far more renters than home owners, will receive only 18 per cent even though it has 27 per cent of the population. Is that fair? Is that a contribution? We are trying to hold this country together by showing people they get treated equally, and that from region to region there is some sense of equal treatment.

We have a government that says actions will speak louder than words. The Prime Minister got up in this House all last week and said, "I am not going to go into Quebec and discuss federalism because my actions will speak louder than my words." We have his actions in front of us tonight. We have a tax bill that is going to discriminate substantially against the people of Quebec. Those are his actions to put against his words. We also have the maritimes and a province like my own province of Manitoba which will receive fewer benefits than their populations deserve.